

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed February 2, 2005, the Examiner noted that claims 1-10 were pending, and rejected all claims. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended, claim 6 has been canceled, new claims 11 and 12 have been added, and, thus, in view of the forgoing claims 1-5 and 7-12 remain pending for reconsideration which is requested. No new matter has been added. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 1-6 and 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Shiman. In particular, the Examiner point to paragraphs 156-158 of Shiman, which particularly state:

[0156] FIG. 17 shows an interface for a list context view of electronic mail objects. From this interface, a user is shown an overview of conversations taking place within a particular discussion group. Shown on each line of the table are values of attributes in an individual e-mail object: subject 1701, author's name 1702, and the date received 1704. The list of e-mail objects may be searched by using the general search function 1705, limited by using the query function (not shown), or sorted by primary, secondary and ternary attributes 1707.

[0157] The list of e-mail objects may be sorted by time received, by author, and by subject with the sorting interface 1706. If sorted by subject, a staggered presentation is possible 1707 in which the e-mail objects are indented to reflect their hierarchical position in the conversation. In the staggered view, a new conversation thread begins flush with the left margin; replies to the original e-mail are indented once, and each reply to the first reply is indented twice. Neither the author nor the subject offers unique identifiers for e-mail objects, but within a one-second granularity, the receipt time for an e-mail message is unique. The complete set of all applicable permutations of e-mail object sorting methods is: by date, by subject, by author, by author then subject, by subject then author, by subject then date, by author then date, by author then subject then date, and by subject then author then date. Typically, the date is used as a final sorting order.

[0158] Selecting a subject string 1701 will invoke a detailed view of the container e-mail object. Selecting a user name 1702 will invoke a detailed context view of the user object with that name. Selecting the e-mail address, first name, or last name (all shown as 1703) will instruct the client's web browser to begin an e-mail letter addressed to the selected user. The e-mail list context is also the discussion group detailed context when all of the e-mail objects listed belong to the same discussion group.

(See Shiman ¶s 156-158)

This portion of Shiman is referencing figure 17 which shows:

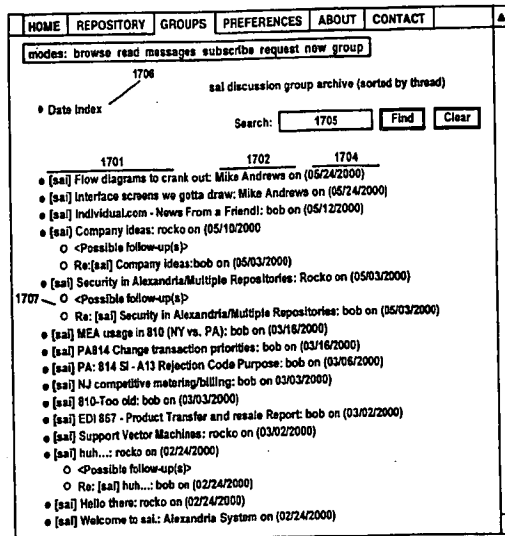


FIG. 17

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(See Shiman, figure 17)

This text and the drawing made reference thereto in the above text of paragraphs 156-158 discusses a hierarchical list structure for showing a sequence of conversations within a group. That is, this is a list type display.

In contrast, the present invention provides a display of "a tree structure corresponding to the hierarchy, the tree showing which messages were sent as replies-to or forwardings-of which respective other messages in the hierarchy" (see claim 8 as well as claims 1, 5 and 7). Such a tree structure is depicted in figure 8 of the application. Shiman does not teach or suggest such a tree structure.

In addition, as depicted in application figure 12, the present invention not only shows a list structure with indicia but also the tree structure as is emphasized in claim 1. Shiman does not teach or suggest such.

It is submitted that the present claimed invention of claims 1-6 and 8-10 patentably distinguishes over Shiman and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Page 4 of the Office Action rejects claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Shiman.

As discussed above, Shiman is directed to a system that discusses a list structure. In contrast, the present invention of claim 7 displays a tree structure. Shiman does not teach or suggest the use of a tree structure for email relationship display.

It is submitted that the invention of independent claim 7 distinguishes over the prior art and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

The features of claims 1-5 and 7-10 are not taught or suggested by the prior art.

The dependent claims are deemed patentable due at least to their dependence from allowable independent claims. These claims are also patentable due to their recitation of independently distinguishing features. For example, claim 10 calls for relating similar but different titles. This feature is not taught or suggested by the prior art. Withdrawal of the rejection of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

New claim 11 is dependent on claim 1 and is allowable for the reasons discussed above. In addition new claim 11 emphasizes the display of sender addresses in a hierarchical structure. This feature is not taught or suggested by the prior art

New claim 12 emphasizes display areas with a relationship and that show the tree structure of the relationship between email messages. These features are not taught or suggested by the prior art

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

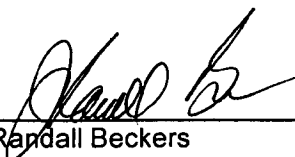
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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